UNITED
NATIONS

WORLD CONFERENCE ON
NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION

Yokohama, Japan
23-27 May 1994

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CONF.172/3
19 April 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

ORGANIZATION OF WORK, INCLUDING ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MAIN COMMITTEE OF THE CONFERENCE

Note by the Secretariat

1. In its decisions 4 and 5 of 31 March 1994, the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction decided to recommend to the Conference the adoption of the provisional agenda and the provisional programme of work for the Conference. The proposals contained herein have been prepared on the basis of those decisions, and on decision 3 of the same date, in which the Preparatory Committee decided to recommend to the Conference several provisions in regard to the organization of work of the Conference.

I. INFORMAL PRE-CONFERENCE CONSULTATIONS

2. In its resolution 48/188 of 21 December 1994, the General Assembly decided that the Conference should take place from 23 to 27 May 1994 in Yokohama, Japan. It is suggested that informal pre-Conference consultations take place at the same venue on 22 May. The purpose of the informal consultations, which will be open to all participating States, is to reach agreement on recommendations to be made on all procedural and organizational matters to be dealt with by the Conference at the opening meeting, including the election of officers, the composition of the General Committee, the adoption of the rules of procedure, the adoption of the agenda and organization of work, the appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee and arrangements for the preparation of the report of the Conference.

II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

3. Rule 6 of the provisional rules of procedure for the Conference (A/CONF.172/2) provides that:

---

* A/CONF.172/1.

"The Conference shall elect from the representatives of participating States a Bureau consisting of the following officers: a President and 25 Vice-Presidents, one of whom shall serve as Rapporteur-Général. These officers shall be elected on the basis of ensuring the representative character of the General Committee. In addition, the Conference shall have four Vice-Presidents ex officio. The Conference may also elect such other officers as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions."

4. Pursuant to rules 6 and 11, the Conference would thus have a General Committee composed of the President, the Vice-Presidents (one of whom would also be serving as Rapporteur-Général), the Chairman of the Main Committee and the Chairmen of the Technical Committees. In accordance with standard practice, the Presidency of the Conference would go to the host country. Pursuant to Preparatory Committee decision 3, the 25 Vice-Presidents would be distributed according to the following geographical pattern: seven from African States, five from Asian States, three from Eastern European States, five from Latin American and Caribbean States, and five from Western European and other States.

5. The Preparatory Committee also decided that the Conference would have the following four ex officio Vice-Presidents: the Chairmen of the Special High-level Council and of the Scientific and Technical Committee of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the Chairman of the Preparatory Group of the Scientific and Technical Committee for the Conference, and "the father" of the Decade, Mr. Frank Press.

III. ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

6. The Conference will have before it the provisional rules of procedure (A/CONF.172/2), which the Preparatory Committee, in its decision 2, decided to transmit to the Conference for adoption.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The provisional agenda for the Conference is contained in document A/CONF.172/1.

V. ORGANIZATION OF WORK, INCLUDING ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MAIN COMMITTEE OF THE CONFERENCE

A. Organization of work

8. The Conference will have before it a proposed timetable for the work of the Conference, as approved by the Preparatory Committee in its decision 5, in which it is suggested that the organization of work for the Conference should be as follows:

(a) The Plenary would hold a general debate from 23 to 25 May;

(b) The Main Committee would meet from 24 to 26 May;

(c) The Technical Committees would meet from the afternoon of 23 May to 26 May.

B. Allocation of items

9. It is proposed that items 1-8 and 12 of the provisional agenda be considered in plenary meeting, that items 9 and 11 be allocated to the Main Committee, and that item 10 be allocated to the Technical Committees.

C. General debate

10. The general debate would take place on the afternoons of 23-25 May. No delegation would be allowed to speak more than once in the general debate. A time-limit of 10 minutes would be established for statements by representatives of Governments, seven minutes for representatives of United Nations specialized agencies, organizations and programmes and intergovernmental organizations, and five minutes for all other statements.

D. Establishment of the Main Committee of the Conference

11. The Main Committee of the Conference would meet from 24 to 26 May. Its Chairman would be elected by the Conference in accordance with the provisions of rule 6 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Conference.

E. Timetable for the work of the Conference

12. The proposed timetable for the work of the Conference is contained in the annex to the present note. It is understood that the Main Committee will adjust its organization of work as required.

F. Organization of meetings

13. The resources available to the Conference permit the holding of a maximum of two simultaneous meetings in the morning and two in the afternoon, with interpretation facilities. Such meetings could include meetings of committees, subcommittees, working groups or informal consultations. In addition, provisions have been made for extended afternoon meetings, as required. Interpretation facilities can be provided for regional or interest-group meetings only when they are held in place of formal meetings.

14. In accordance with the provisions of rule 48 of the provisional rules of procedure, the Conference may establish Technical Committees and such other committees and working groups as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions. Subject to a decision of the Plenary of the Conference, the Main Committee may also set up subcommittees and working groups, as required, particularly with regard to the drafting of the final outcome of the Conference (item 11 of the provisional agenda). It should be noted, however, that

committees, subcommittees and working groups can be established only to the extent permitted by conference service facilities available at the Conference site.

15. Meetings should normally be scheduled from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. In order to ensure the most efficient utilization of available resources, it is essential that all meetings start promptly at the scheduled time.

VI. CREDENTIALS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CONFERENCE: APPOINTMENT OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

16. Rule 4 of the provisional rules of procedure provides that there shall be a Credentials Committee of nine members appointed at the beginning of the Conference and that its composition shall be based on that of the Credentials Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its forty-eighth session.

17. At the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the Credentials Committee was composed of the following States: Austria, Bahamas, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Mauritius, Russian Federation, Thailand and United States of America. Should any of those States not participate in the Conference, another member of the same regional group would be designated.

VII. REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

18. In accordance with the practice followed at previous United Nations conferences, it is recommended that the report of the Conference consist of the decisions of the Conference, a brief account of the events leading to the convening of the Conference and of the proceedings, and a repertorial account of the work of the Main Committee and the Technical Committees and of the action taken in plenary meeting on their recommendations.

19. It is recommended that each regional group be requested to designate, before the opening of the Conference, one person to serve as friend of the Rapporteur-Général to assist that official in preparing the draft report of the Conference.

ANNEX

Provisional programme of work for the Conference

Sunday, 22 May

p.m. Informal pre-Conference consultations

Plenary

Monday, 23 May

a.m. and p.m.

Item 1 Opening of the Conference

Item 2 Election of the President

Item 3 Adoption of the rules of procedure

Item 4 Adoption of the agenda

Item 5 Election of officers other than the President

Item 6 Organization of work, including the establishment of committees

Item 7 Credentials of representatives to the Conference:

(a) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee

Item 8 Activities for natural disaster reduction

Item 7 Credentials of representatives to the Conference:

(b) Report of the Credentials Committee

Tuesday, 24 May and Wednesday, 25 May

p.m.* Item 8 Activities for natural disaster reduction [conclusion]

---

* Extended as necessary to accommodate the list of speakers.

Friday, 27 May

a.m. and p.m. Item 12 Adoption of the report of the Conference

Main Committee

Tuesday, 24 May

a.m. Item 11 Outcome of the Conference, including a plan of action for natural disaster reduction

Item 9 Programmes and policies of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction:

(b) Public and private sector interface

Wednesday, 25 May

a.m. Item 9 Programmes and policies of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction:

(a) Regional reports

Thursday, 26 May

a.m. Item 9 Programmes and policies of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction [conclusion]:

(a) Regional reports (continued)

p.m. Item 11 Outcome of the Conference, including a plan of action for natural disaster reduction [conclusion]

Adoption of the report to the Plenary

Technical Committees

Monday, 23 May

p.m. Item 10 Natural disaster reduction:

(a) Vulnerable communities

Tuesday, 24 May

a.m.	Item 10	Natural disaster reduction [continued]:
		(b) Hazard resistant structures
p.m.	Item 10	Natural disaster reduction [continued]:
		(c) Effects of disasters on modern societies

Wednesday, 25 May

a.m.	Item 10	Natural disaster reduction [continued]:
		(d) Interrelationships between technological and natural hazards
p.m.	Item 10	Natural disaster reduction [continued]:
		(e) Economic aspects of disaster reduction for sustainable development

Thursday, 26 May

a.m.	Item 10	Natural disaster reduction [continued]:
		(f) Warning systems
p.m.	Item 10	(g) Drought management